Minutes of the November 9, 2018 FCSM College Council Meeting.

The FCSM College Council met in Smith Hall, Room 306 at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Jennifer Scott, Chairperson, presiding.

Member Attendees: FCSM: Vonnie Shields; Biological Sciences: Mark Bulmer, Angela Cox, Chemistry: Ana Maria Soto, Shannon Stitzel; Computer and Information Sciences: Josh Dehlinger, Scott Hilberg; Physics, Astronomy, & Geosciences: Jennifer Scott; Mathematics: Sergiy Borodachov, Yunwei Cui; At Large: Kelly Elkins (Chemistry); Student Representatives: Steve Blama (Graduate Student, Physics), Ian Gilbert (Undergraduate Student, Chemistry and Molecular Biology, Biochemistry & Bioinformatics)

Absent: (notified in advance) Wendy Nelson (Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences), Elizabeth Goode (At large, Mathematics)

Guests: David Schaefer (Department Chair, Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences & Coordinator for the move to the new Science Building), Howard Kaplon (FCSM), Angel Kumchev (FCSM)

Chairperson Jennifer Scott called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Special Guest: David Schaefer
   - David Schaefer, the coordinator for the move to the new science building, provided an update on the plans for the upcoming move. He plans to send updates to Fisher College faculty every other week. Dave will provide information in the updates, but his role is also to serve as a facilitator for questions.
   - In terms of a timeline; the plan is to move everything in the Summer of 2020, and the move is planned to be completed by the Fall of 2020. The move will not occur throughout the 2020-2021 academic year, as previous estimations indicated. Sometime around May, Kerry Spence (Facilities) will work on furniture for the new building. After some initial selection, Kerry plans to have a show room where people can pick up preferences for their offices or departments.
   - To optimize the move, equipment to be moved has been divided into 4 categories:
     a) Equipment that needs special moving instructions: A committee that includes representatives from each department and Mark Monk (representing UEBL) has been formed. The committee has met, and they plan to complete an inventory of the equipment to be moved by the end of Thanksgiving (approximately by November 26). Dave recommends to err on the side of caution and include anything that could break and would be expensive to replace. It is hard to establish a cut line between expensive and not expensive, but anything that you will have a concern about a general mover moving should go in this special category. For example, glassware should go under special equipment. Once the list is complete, Tia Joseph (Materials Management) is going to develop a plan about when and who to contact, including as appropriate, the manufacturers, other universities that have completed a similar move and the appropriate movers.
b) **Chemicals**: These items have been subdivided into two categories: ‘Chemicals’ and ‘Animals & Plants’. A committee has been formed and they plan to get an inventory of the chemicals that will be moved. For some chemicals, it will not make sense to move them but rather to try to use them up. The committee inquired whether it is possible to bank lab fee money, use up current stocks and use the banked money to buy new stocks in the new building, but the university does not allow banking lab fees. The ‘Animals & Plants’ category includes very specific items, mainly from the department of Biological Sciences. Typically, the chemicals in freezers and refrigerators would be under ‘Chemicals’.

c) **Regular Equipment and Supplies**

d) **Faculty offices and Department Materials**: The goal for this part of the move is to reduce the amount of paper that needs to be moved. This applies to both department and individual faculty offices. We are all encouraged to scan files and get rid of paper copies. The more we can do now, the better.

- Some faculty have expressed that they would prefer to move their own equipment. However, we need to remember that we are liable if we break equipment in the move while the moving company is liable if they break equipment while moving it. If you have any concern, please come and talk to Dave, Tia or Kerry.

- In addition to the move, some planning is needed regarding office space and scheduling of classes. Every department handles scheduling differently, but we need to develop a scheduling plan because there are many shared classrooms in the new building. Dave plans to arrange for a meeting with the people who make the schedules in each department and the department chairs sometime in the Spring semester.

- The comments and questions from council members and Dave’s responses included:
  - Parking: Decisions have not been made regarding parking in Glen Garage, but it is clear that more faculty & staff spots will be needed.
  - Shared Lab Spaces: Most of the lab space in the new building is shared space for chemistry, biology, geology and UEBL. In Physics, there are some individual lab spaces due to the use of lasers.
  - UEBL: There has been some discussion about the future use of the current UEBL facilities because there was so much NSF money spent on this renovation, but no decisions have been made so far. However, one of the conditions to have new building was that all science would move to the new building.
  - Tenure Clock: Faculty hired now or a year or two before the move will be impacted in their productivity. The official word is that we will deal with this in the same way we deal with any situation that impacts tenure. Affected faculty could write a letter to appeal and ask for an extension. When appropriate, it should not be a problem to add an addendum to the corresponding contracts.
  - Storage: There is not much programmed space for storage in the new building. We may need to use some of Smith Hall for storage.
  - Summer classes: It may not be possible to teach summer classes that include labs in the Summer of 2020.
2. **Approval of minutes from the October 12, 2018 FCSM College Council meeting:** Minutes were approved with one abstention.

3. **Announcements and remarks from the Acting Dean**
   
   3.1. Please encourage faculty in your department to attend John Sivey’s Fisher Lecture (November 14, 2018) and the Fall Forum (December 7, 2018 at the Minnegan Room). These are good opportunities to support your colleagues. At the fall forum chairs will introduce new faculty, colleagues will get awards and the college will acknowledge individuals who have recently retired.
   
   3.2. On January 16, 2019, there will be an event to facilitate the adoption of the new branding. The details are not yet available, but it will probably be a whole day event and the agenda will cover information related to the new logo including for example procedures to order supplies with the Towson new logo through AgoraCX.
   
   3.3. The January Conference is scheduled for January 9, 2019, (snow date: January 16, 2018) at the West Village Commons. This January conference will focus on the Academic Success of Transfer Students.
   
   3.4. Fund for Faculty Excellence Task Group: Funding is available (20 to 25K) to organize one event per college per year that would impact a large number of faculty (25 to 50). The Dean’s office would need to match 20% of the awarded funds. Applications are due on December 6, 2018 and have a 2-page limit describing the expected impact of the proposed activity. One possibility for our college would be to invite a diversity speaker we had considered before but that was too expensive for our budget (15K).
   
   3.5. Ner Israel Rabbinical College-Towson University Joint Program: It is very unlikely that we would be able to sign a memorandum of understanding to renew this joint program. The current program is likely to end in the Summer of 2019. This program has allowed Talmudic Law students to come to Towson to take science courses and be able to apply to medical & dental schools. However, due to problems with accreditation the program is likely to move to Stevenson University after the Summer of 2019.
   
   3.6. The Dean’s office is planning some display changes: The cabinet in front of the Dean’s office, which contains art from a mathematics faculty member, will be moved inside the office, and the plaques recognizing faculty & staff awards will be displayed in front of the Dean’s Office. In addition, faculty who have written books and would like to have them on display should contact the Dean’s office.
   
   3.7. The office of the Provost would not like any college to have a newsletter. Thus, the FCSM website will be updated and every department will have their news displayed in their website. In addition, we will have a “memo” that will summarize our news.
   
   3.8. As discussed in our previous meeting, there were two events where OTS described the technology that will be available in the new building. In addition to the new building, OTS described some useful resources already in place at the university including the virtual map of the campus that allows one to see the technology in specific classrooms, and other helpful resources from Lynda.com. There is a classroom in Smith Hall renovated to mimic the technology in the new building. Will Carosella, our liaison for classroom technology, plans to have office hours in that classroom in the future.
4. Announcements from the Council Chairperson

4.1. We have new representatives from Biological Sciences: Mark Bulmer is replacing Jackie Doyle and Angela Cox is replacing Elizabeth O’Hare. Mark Bulmer is an Associate Professor in the Organism and the Cell and Molecular Biology Concentrations. His research focuses on termites and other social organisms. Angela Cox is a lecturer and she primarily teaches Introductory Biology Courses.

4.2. Senate Update:
- The University Senate voted to have an Academic Senate. The next step is to figure out a process to incentivize faculty to vote, because according to the current constitution, more than 50% of faculty would need to vote to approve this change (in the current constitution someone who does not vote count as a “no” vote).
- The University Senate passed a motion to advise the whole university to move to electronic PTRMs. Some departments in the Fisher College have already been using electronic forms. Dave Vanko (Interim Provost) and Jeff Schmidt (Towson University CIO) have discussed this and there is a piece of software already existing in the university that may work well for this purpose.

4.3. Comprehensive Universities in the University System of Maryland are directed to teach 7.5 course units per full time faculty member. We averaged 7.3 the last time this number was measured. However, the current calculation based on course units impacts us negatively by not appropriately counting all the credit hours we teach. Members of the Board of Regents visited Towson last Tuesday and it may be possible for us to redesign the way this number is calculated.

4.4. Dr. Lou Strolger from the Space Telescope Science Institute will visit Towson University on November 30, 2018. He will present a seminar for the Physics Department in the morning and another more general talk for the entire college in the afternoon. Dr. Strolger has many important insights on the value of diversity in science.

5. Updates from FCSM Departments

5.1. Biological Sciences: The department is currently reviewing their PTRM document and adjusting guidelines to accommodate clinical faculty. The department renamed one of their concentrations as “Ecology, evolution and conservation.” There will be a seminar about hyperglycemia in birds this coming Tuesday.

5.2. Chemistry: The department is currently conducting two faculty searches. One candidate will come before Thanksgiving and several more candidates will visit after Thanksgiving. The successful candidates for both of these positions are expected to start in the Fall of 2019. John Sivey’s Fisher Chair Seminar will be next Wednesday.

5.3. Computer and Information Sciences: The department has initiated a couple of faculty searches, but they are in the very early stages.

5.4. Mathematics: The department is conducting a faculty search for an Assistant Professor in Applied Mathematics. The review of applications will start on December 15th. The department plans to bring candidates to campus next year and to have the successful candidate start next Fall. Over the last month, the department hosted a Diversity talk and a Competition in Modeling using Differential Equations.
5.5. Physics, Astronomy, and Geosciences: The department is conducting a search for a geology faculty. Candidates will be coming for interviews starting on Monday. The department hopes to have the successful candidate start in the Spring of 2019.

6. Old Business
6.1. FCSM Undergraduate Research Grants: The College Council requested input from FCSM departments regarding the role of the undergraduate research grants. One issue discussed in past meetings was that there are funding differences among the various departments. The discussion included:
   • Students in Computer Sciences and Mathematics do not typically apply for funding because the resources they need are not included in the current funding guidelines (stipends for students and computer resources costing over $500).
   • Other universities include scholarships & stipends in undergraduate research funds.
   • Some faculty don’t like the idea of students getting credits and stipends, but it was also pointed out that students completing internships often get credit and stipends.
   • Wet labs need money for supplies without which students cannot do any research.
   • Different departments have different needs and may need different guidelines.

7. New Business
7.1. FCSM Promotion and Tenure Document: According to the 3-year cycle, the College P&T document is undergoing revisions. Possible changes include the simplification of the tabs in the dossiers and the handling of minority reports. Currently, there are no written guidelines about minority reports, and since they are signed, the submission of a report removes anonymity. Council members should ask their departments about any issues to be consider for revisions. Changes to the document will be voted by the college.
7.2. Transfer students: The process of admitting transfer students is affecting some departments in our college. Students earning Associate Degrees from Community Colleges in Maryland are guaranteed admission to Towson University as long as they apply by the deadline. Our college has always tried to accommodate transfer students by providing funds to open new sections when necessary. However, transfer students represent a large number of students that are added to classes two or three weeks before the semester starts, putting pressure in enrolled students and often requiring the creation of new sections. This affects the quality of classes because instructors are hired on short notice and without much selection. This also affects transfer students as they struggle to get a full schedule so close to the beginning of classes. Also, there are safety issues related to new instructors teaching lab courses on short notice, and the hiring of adjunct instructors also goes against the goal of having 50% of tenured or tenure-track faculty teaching courses.

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ana Maria Soto
Recording Secretary